

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 2, 2020**

June 2, 2020 - 9:00 a.m. Commissioners met in the Farmers Room.

Members present: Madam Chairman Anderson, Commissioners Barta, Burianek, Skorheim and Wild.

Madam Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Barta to approve the May 19, 2020 regular meeting minutes, monthly bills, and agenda addition Homme Dam mower, LEC Contract and Grassroots Newsletter. Second by Wild. Motion carried.

Commissioners Wild and Anderson met with Grafton City Mayor, Chris West and Council President, Chris Lipsh yesterday. They would like to extend the contract period for discussing the numbers for the LEC Building and make sure everyone is understanding the numbers the same way. **Motion by Wild to extend the negotiation period to August 4th, the first commission meeting in August.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Sharon Lipsh, Highway Superintendent, appeared for the following:

- The County has received a 5% premium discount (\$1,569.50) for LMS training. A 5% safety discount (\$1,569.50) and a premium dividend refund of \$6,493.35. Lipsh would like to deposit into the Safety Funds to purchase equipment such as chairs and standing desks for employees. **Motion by Barta to deposit funds into the safety fund.** Second by Wild. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Increased air flow has been recommended in fighting COVID-19. The I-Wave Air Purifier is used to kill mold, bacteria, viruses and remove allergens in the air. Customer Aire provided a bid to install I-Wave systems in the courthouse, Chase, LEC and Admin Buildings for \$12,365.00. The price includes all parts and labor. Could possibly be reimbursed through FEMA as it is COVID related. **Motion by Wild to accept the bid of \$12,365.00 from Custom Aire and move forward with installing air purifiers in the county buildings.** Second by Barta. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Discussed taking load limits off. **Motion by Barta to remove load limits tomorrow, June 3, 2020.** Second by Burianek. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Provided and discussed an updated project list. There will be a culvert class on June 24, 2020. TNS is providing the culvert for the culvert class. Seeding right of way was also discussed.

Pursuant to NDCC 57-12-01 the County Commissioners met as the County Tax Equalization Board at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Ed Sevigny and Valerie Dalbey from the tax directors office, Justin Sobak and Bjorn Flaten.

Dewey Township did not sign their assessor's book in opposition of the increased valuation presented by Assessor, Stacy Loftsgard. Can't tile in Dewey Township. Tiling and irrigation are part of individual management and isn't part of determining value.

Mr. Sobak's farm exemption was previously denied because his paperwork was not properly filled out. Sobak later provided numbers to the tax director to support the exemption. **Motion by Skorheim to follow the recommendation of the tax director and take the Sobak property off of the tax rolls.** Second by Wild. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Wild left the meeting.

There was further discussion about the tax equalization and farm exemptions. The tax director has to follow directives from the state and must follow North Dakota Century Code.

Bjorn Flaten was present for the Flaten Appeal. There are two houses on the property but a farm exemption was only given to one of the houses. Peder and Julianne Flaten are retired farmers but Bjorn Flaten is an active farmer who has not supplied gross income information to the Tax Director's Office at this time. Ed Sevigny did an exterior inspection and provided a notice of increase of \$44,959. Sevigny recommended keeping the increased value at \$44,959. Mr. Flaten stated that the foundation is deteriorating, the house is 50 feet away from the other house and they are both hooked to the same power and water, have the same address and the furnaces are old in both houses. The homes are 70 years old and probably have asbestos in them. Flaten's refused twice to have an interior inspection. **Motion by Barta to follow the recommendation of the tax director and keep the increased value at \$44,959.** Motion failed for lack of a second. Further discussed actual sales, using same numbers for everyone and treating everyone the same. **Motion by Barta to use \$44,959 if they don't fill out the paperwork and qualify.** Second by Burianek. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried. Wild absent.

Jim Langerud sent a letter to Tax Director, Ed Sevigny. Ed visited with Mr. Langerud and he clarified that it was 15% not 10%.

Reviewed comparison sheets for 2019 and 2020. Commercial property is in tolerance, residential is not. Sevigny recommended a 9% increase on structures in Grafton Township. If the increase is less than 15% a notice does not need to be provided. The increase could have been up to 27% based on sales and being there were no increases last year. **Motion by Barta to increase the residential structures in Grafton Township by 9%.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote Barta, Skorheim and Anderson voted yes. Burianek voted no and Wild was absent. Motion carried.

Wes & Sandra Welch are requesting an abatement for 2018 & 2019 due to an incorrectly drawn parcel in GIS which lead to an incorrect valuation. **Motion by Skorheim to follow the recommendation of the tax director and approve the abatement for 2018 & 2019.** Second by Barta. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Wes & Sandra Welch	Lampton Twp	24-6071	2018 RET	\$45,831
Wes & Sandra Welch	Lampton Twp	24-6071	2019 RET	\$44,988

At 10:10 a.m. the commissioners returned to their regular meeting.

Wanda Kratochvil, Health District Administrator, appeared to discuss reopening the courthouse to the public. Tanya Wieler, HR Director was present via conference call.

- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act has been updated to reflect the additional 14 days leave. Tanya will monitor all leave.
- Department heads discussed face masks extensively. It was felt that if the County was going to recommend that face masks be worn then the county should provide them. Part-time help has been hired to help clean. Most of the supplies have been ordered or are on way. Each department will have to work on social distancing for their departments. **Motion by Barta to open to the public on Monday, June 15th.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried. Wanda will work on verbiage so that all departments are using the same language for advertising reopening. We will announce on Facebook, county website and TV channels.

Sharon Lipsh returned to complete her agenda items.

- Received only 1 bid for a lawn mower for Homme Dam. Looked at Toro's at Dale's Small Engine in Park River but he never provided a bid. The bid from John Deere was \$19,500 with an \$11,000 trade for a cost of \$8,500. It has a 60" deck. The old mower is a 2014. **Motion by Burianek to accept the bid from John Deere.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Clarified some questions on the project list.
- The county auction has been delayed due to COVID-19.
- The new disk for the blade has probably paid for itself in the 2 miles. Now all the blade operators want one.
- Discussed a fix for frost boils in the road that is successfully being used in Minnesota.

The Grassroots Newsletter said that there would be no money for the Prairie Dog bill at this time.

Discussed Standing Committees. Auditor will check to see if Barta is still on the Resolution Committee.

Report of county offices for fees collected during May: County Recorder \$6,217.00 and Sheriff fees \$1,321.40.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Karen A Anderson, Madam Chairman

Attest:

Kris Molde, Auditor